

6. “The Fir Tree”

by Hans Christian Andersen
(Adaptation)

Out in the woods stood a nice little Fir Tree. The sun shone on him, there was fresh air, and around him grew many large-sized trees. But the little Fir wanted so very much to be a grown-up tree. At the end of a year he had shot up a good deal, and after another year he was another bit taller.

“I wish I was as big as the other trees,” he sighed. “Then I could spread out my branches with the tops to look into the wide world! The birds would build nests among my branches.”

Neither the sunbeams, nor the birds, nor the clouds which sailed above him, gave the little Tree any pleasure.

In winter, when the snow lay on the ground, a rabbit would often come along and jump right over the Tree. That made him so angry! But after two more winters, the Tree was so large that the rabbit had to go round it. “To grow and grow, to get older and be tall,” thought the Tree, “that is the most best thing in the world!”

In autumn the woodcutters always came and chopped down some of the largest trees. This happened every year, and the young Fir Tree trembled at the sight. The magnificent great trees fell to the earth with great noise and cracking. The branches were lopped off and the trees looked long and bare.

In spring, when the swallows and the storks came, the Tree asked them, “Don’t you know where the trees have been taken?”

The swallows did not know anything about it, but the Stork nodded his head. “Yes, I think I know. I met many ships as I was flying around. The ships had large masts, and I think they that smelled of fir.”

“Oh, I would love to fly across the sea! What does the sea look like?”

“That would take a long time to explain,” said the Stork, and with these words off he went.

“Rejoice in your growth!” said the Sunbeams. And the Wind kissed the Tree, and the Dew wept tears over him. The Fir did not understand and was still unhappy.

Word Count: 359

NAME: _____

QUESTIONS

DATE: _____

Comprehension Questions

“The Fir Tree”

Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:

1. **Literal** What did the Fir Tree want so very much?
 - » to be a grown-up tree
2. **Inferential** Why did the Fir Tree tremble each autumn when he saw the woodcutters chopping down some of the largest trees?
 - » He was afraid because he saw the great trees fall to the earth and their branches chopped off, leaving them bare; he also didn’t know where the trees were taken. He also knew one day he would be a large tree so he might get chopped down as well.
3. **Inferential** How did the Stork make the Fir Tree feel better about where the trees went?
 - » The Stork said he had met many large ships as he was flying around. This made the Fir Tree happy because he said he would love to fly across the sea just as the stork does.